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NOTE ON 'AN AUTOGRAPH RESPONSUM OF MAIMONIDES' (*JQR.*, VI, 225 ff.).

DR. HALPER's interesting article on 'An Autograph Responsum of Maimonides' will be welcomed by all students of Maimonides. The following remarks may indicate the interest with which the writer has read Dr. Halper's publication.

The bibliography of Maimonides' responsa and autographs quoted on p. 225, n. 2, may be considerably amplified. Four autograph pages of the *More* were published by Hirschfeld in *JQR.*, XV, 678 ff. An autograph responsum was published by me in *MGWJ.*, LII, 621 ff. An Arabic letter, bearing in all likelihood Maimonides' autograph signature, was published by S. H. Margulies, of Florence, in the same magazine, vol. XLIV, 8 ff. Finally, the Arabic original of Maimonides' famous anti-Karaite decree was edited by me in the same Review, vol. LIII, 469 ff.

Professor Simonsen, in Copenhagen, referred to by Dr. Halper (p. 226), is now in possession not only of the well-known Arabic manuscript of Maimonides' responsa underlying Tama's translation, but also of a copy of the Bodleian MS. (Catal. Neubauer, No. 814) containing a goodly number of Maimonides' responsa in Arabic, see Simonsen in *Guttmann Jubelschrift*, p. 213. From his remarks, *ibidem*, p. 217, it appears that he is the happy owner of still another collection of Maimonides' responsa. I may add that I myself possess a photographic reproduction of the Bodleian MS.

Dr. Halper's characterization of Maimonides' Arabic constructions as 'ungrammatical' (p. 225) is erroneous and, applied to a man of Maimonides' standard of culture, extremely unjust. I have on numerous occasions (in the introduction to *Der arabische Sprachgebrauch des Maimonides* (part I), in the introductory grammatical sketch to *Selections from the Arabic Writings of Maimonides*,

pp. xiv ff., in the article *Die arabische Sprache des Maimonides*, in *Moses ben Maimon*, edited by Guttmann, vol. I, 421 ff.) demonstrated in detail that Maimonides' Arabic is essentially the language generally used during that period.

As for the responsum itself, it is interesting to note the two dots above the ת (recto, l. 16). It is characteristic of Maimonides' way of spelling, and is found in the other autographs as well. The use of ו after אָר (verso, l. 6), supposedly an imitation of the rabbinic וְהָאָרָיְלָן, is also typical of Maimonides' style. Recto, l. 14, add מְנַהָּ עַנְהָ after מְנַהָּ. It is found in the photograph, and has no doubt been left out by mistake.

The explanation of וַיְבָרַךְ and וַיְשַׁבַּרְךָ (p. 227, n. 5) as Hebrew words followed by Arabic suffixes (= וַיְבָרַכְךָ and וַיְשַׁבְּרַכְךָ) is unacceptable. The suffixes are *Hebrew*, and the feminine gender refers to the preceding titles, הָדָרָת יִקְרָת וּכְ' which are feminine. The construction is an imitation of an identical Arabic usage, an example of which may be found in a letter addressed to Maimonides, published by me in the Jubilee volume in honour of Hermann Cohen (Judaica) under the title *Ein Gratulationsbrief an Maimonides*, p. 263, n. 7.

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END OF VOLUME VI, NEW SERIES.